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RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY

RUCPDOC/USDOC WASHDC PRIORITY

RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

RUYNAAAC/COMNAVFORJAPAN YOKOSUKA JA PRIORITY

RHHMUNA/HQ USPACOM HONOLULU HI PRIORITY

RHHMHBA/COMPACFLT PEARL HARBOR HI//N541// PRIORITY

RHMFIUU/HQ PACAF HICKAM AFB HI//CC/PA// PRIORITY

RUHBANB/OKINAWA FLD OFC US FORCES JAPAN CP BUTLER JA PRIORITY

RHMFIUU/USFJ PRIORITY

INFO RUEHFK/AMCONSUL FUKUOKA 6995

RUEHNH/AMCONSUL NAHA 9378

RUEHNAG/AMCONSUL NAGOYA 5453

RUEHKSO/AMCONSUL SAPPORO 7591

RUEHOK/AMCONSUL OSAKA KOBE 0664

RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 2537

RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 2194

RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 8575

RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 9123

RHEHAAA/NSC WASHDC

UNCLAS TOKYO 000883

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

STATE FOR I/RF, PA/PR/FPC/W, IIP/G/EA, EAP/PD, R/MR,
EAP/J, EAP/P, PM;
USTR FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE;
TREASURY FOR OASIA/IMI;
SECDEF FOR OASD/PA;
CP BUTLER OKINAWA FOR AREA FIELD OFFICE;
PACOM HONOLULU FOR PUBLIC DIPLOMACY ADVISOR

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: TOKYO MEDIA REACTION - SECTARIAN VIOLENCE IN
IRAQ, NATO SUMMIT, AND PAKISTAN

¶11. LEAD STORIES: All Tuesday morning papers gave top play to yesterday's expiration of gasoline surcharges for road construction, noting that pump prices fell at a number of stations across Japan at midnight.

¶12. "'Six-Day War' Highlights Instability" The liberal Asahi reported from Cairo (4/1): "While the recent battle between Iraqi security forces and the Mahdi Army of Shiite cleric al-Sadr, termed a 'Six-Day War,' appears to be coming to an end, it demonstrates the fragile security situation in Iraq, which had been said to be improving. This conflict could have an impact on the compilation of plans for a full-fledged pullout of U.S. and British forces.... Prime Minister Maliki went to Basra with the resolve that it be the final showdown. However, as the battle demonstrated the strength of the Mahdi Army while exposing the limit of his security forces, the prime minister appears to have little choice but to accept a 'truce' through behind-the-scenes negotiations."

¶13. "Russia Determined to Prevent Encroachment into its Backyard" A Moscow correspondent for the conservative Sankei wrote (4/1): "Russia is deeply concerned about NATO coming into its 'backyard,' namely Georgia and Ukraine. President Putin considers the possibility of their membership in NATO 'intolerable' and will use every means available to prevent this from coming to pass.... Putin is expected to attend a NATO session scheduled for Friday. He apparently will attempt to head off NATO's eastward expansion by NATO cargo bound for Afghanistan to pass through Russian territory."

¶4. "Pakistan Opted for Dialogue to Combat Terrorism" The conservative Sankei said in a report from Bangkok (4/1): "In his key policy address on Saturday, Pakistani Prime Minister Gilani revealed a change in the country's hard line toward Islamic armed rebels by declaring that he would hold talks with them. As the prime minister has at the same time pledged to continue the war on terrorism with the U.S., there appears to be an inconsistency in his statements. The outlook for the war on terrorism in Pakistan is becoming increasingly murky."

SCHIEFFER